

portions 50, 52, 72 of the rolling channel 14 and on the conveyor 66 corresponds to the ratio 12:9:12:9:6, i.e., the same as in the apparatus 1-3 of Fig. 3.

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The features of the apparatus 1-1 can be combined with or utilized in lieu of certain features of the apparatus 1-2 to 1-6 and/or vice versa. Furthermore, certain features of the aforescribed presently preferred embodiments of the improved apparatus are believed to be novel *per se* and, therefore, merit patent protection with as well as independently of other features of the respective apparatus. For example, the features which are shown in and which were described with reference to Figs. 6 to 8 are believed to merit patent protection individually (such as the perforating unit) as well as jointly with other features (such as the means defining an arcuate rolling channel which extends beyond the perforating unit). Reference should be had to the commonly owned copending patent application Serial No. 09/775,638 filed February 5, 2001 by Manfred Dombek for "METHOD OF AND APPARATUS FOR INCREASING THE PERMEABILITY OF WRAPPERS OF ROD-SHAPED ARTICLES". Figs. 1-3 of the just mentioned copending patent application are identical with Figs. 6-8 of the present application.

In the Claims:

Please cancel claims 1-11 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Please amend the claims as follows: